river water disputes between India and its neighbouring countries China, Bhutan, Nepal and Banglandesh pertaining to the rivers common to India and these countries. Points of difference raised by Pakistan on the design of Baglihar Hydroelectric Plant on river Chenab in J & K are under Expert Determination by a Neutral Expert from Switzerland appointed by the World Bank. The Neutral Expert has so far held two meetings as well as a wrap up meeting at the conclusion of his site visit in India. Various issues related to the common rivers of the neighbouring countries are however discussed in various joint meetings from time to time.

Completion of Sutlej Canal

†2259. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made in construction work of Sutlej canal in accordance with the directions given in Supreme Court in this regard;

(b) the time likely to be taken for its completion; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take regarding the losses and the problems being faced by farmers of Haryana due to non-distribution of water from Sutlej canal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) The question presumably refers to the Sutlej Yammuna Link (SYL) Canal. Pursuant to a Judgement & Order dated 04.06.2004 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court directing Union of India to carry out its action plan for completion of the SYL Canal in Punjab territory, a Central Agency was nominated to undertake the canal works. An Empowered/High Powered Committee was also set up to coordinate and facilitate early implementation of the decree mentioned in the Judgement & Order dated 04.06.2004. However, the State of Punjab enacted the Punjab Termination of Agreements Act, 2004 terminating all the agreements related to Ravi-Beas waters. When Central Government was informed that any step taken in furtherance of the agreement of 31.12.1981 would be against the legislative mandate of the Act, a Presidential Reference regarding the said Act has been made, outcome of which is awaited.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) and (c) They are dependant upon the outcome of the above Presidential Reference.

Interlinking of major rivers

†2260. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the target of implementing the august plan of interlinking the basin water of major rivers of the country by linking the basins with one another and lastly connecting them with Cauvery basin by the year 2016 has been fixed;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the length of waterways required to be constructed to facilitate the flow of water to reach Cauvery basin?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) A Task Force on Inter-linking of rivers under the Chairmanship of Shri Suresh P. Prabhu, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha was constituted on 13.12.2002. As per the milestone dates attached with the constitution of the Task Force, the feasibility studies on the links and Detailed Project Report (DPR) were scheduled for completion by 31.12.2005 and 31.12.2006 respectively. Also the Interlinking of Rivers (ILR) programme was scheduled for completion by the end of the year 2016. As a part of comprehensive assessment of inter-linking of rivers, a presentation was made by Ministry of Water Resources on 'Interlinking of Rivers' before Hon'ble Prime Minister of October 11, 2004. After the presentation, a number of decision were taken, including to pursue the programme of Interlinking of Rivers with focus on Peninsular Component in a fully consultative manner. The implementation of the interlinking of rivers programme involves a no. of crucial stages *viz.* (i) Preparation of Feasibility Reports, (ii) Agreement/MOU among the states (iii) Preparation of Detailed project Reports (DPR) (iv) Techno-economic appraisal (v) Investment clearance & (vi) Funding the Project and is essentially dependent on the consensus and cooperation of the concerned States.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.